1607/1803

THE

FOOL,

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

By EDWARD TOPHAN, Esq.

DUBLIN:

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M,DCC,LXXXVI.

BRITISH MUSEUM
15
67
APR

To Mrs. WELLS.

Madam,

At a time when you have ſupported the preſent Farce through the ordeal of three different Theatres, and have received the united approbation of the Public on your performance in it, were the Author to withdraw himſelf from the general ſentiment, it might well be held a mark of ſingular and ungrateful character.

The praiſe of friends, however, is not tolerated by the world at large: the moſt diſpaſſionate hold it to be ſuſpicious —while the "*good-natured part*" of it attribute it to our own vanity on the one hand, or an ill-grounded partiality on the other.

On theſe accounts, it is fortunate that your acting, and the Prologue prefixed to this publication, have ſo well ſpoken for themſelves.

There is one reaſon, however, Madam, why theſe pages ſhould be dedicat-

ed to you, which I alone can know, and which I am not aſhamed to acknowledge. It is, that I am indebted for the happieſt parts of them—if it is not offence to ſay there are any happy—to your judgment and imagination.

PRESENTED to you for a Benefit, the Trifle would have died there, had not the partial breath of criticiſm ſupported it into being; the requeſt of ſome perſons, of a taſte equally partial, perhaps, has brought it into prolonged life by this publication.—But for this you are not anſwerable.

You, Madam, have acted your part, and gone through your trial: I, alone, am accountable for the reſt, and my trial is to come.

I have the honour to be,

MADAM,

your humble and obedient ſervant,

THE AUTHOR.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY

M. P. ANDREWS, ESQUIRE.

AND SPOKEN BY

MR. LEWIS.

IN earlier times when wit was rare indeed,
And few could write, as very few could read;
Then but to pen a couplet was to ſhine,
And poetaſters all were dubb'd divine;
Then *Whittington and Cat* went glibly down,
And *Margaret's grimly Ghoſt* ſecur'd renown:
A ſing-ſong ſcribbler then, in want of food,
Might feaſt upon the *Children of the Wood.*—
The Drama likewiſe ſhared an equal chance,
And found its ſafety in it's ignorance:
In number too as moderate as in worth,
One ſeaſon hardly brought one bantling forth.
Far different now—dramatic plenty reigns,
Each threatening week teems with prolific brains;
Play, farce and pantomime ſucceed each other
So quick, we ſcarce diſtinguiſh one from t'other,
While the throng'd Lobby, as each drama ends,
Swarms with the circling croud of critic friends.
"Well—our friend's play may do—why, faith,
"I've known
"Things rather worſe than this ſometimes go
"down:
"We muſt all come to crowd the author's night,
"He's a good ſoul—I wiſh he woudn't write;

" Tho' he's my friend, betwixt ourſelves, d'ye
" ſee,
" I'm pretty near as much aſleep as he."
[*Yawns.*
Theſe are the kind remarks of friends that
flatter;
More open foes leſs dangerouſly beſpatter:
" Damme, what curſed ſtuff!" cries *booted*
" Bobby,
A Cheapſide 'prentice ſtrutting thro' the Lobby;
" Why *this here* fellow here, who writes *that*
" *there*,
" Has no more *gumption* than my founder'd
" mare."
Miſs, in the Boxes, calls it, " Vaſtly low,
" Why would you come, Mama?—why won't
" you go?
" The play is always ſuch a vulgar place,
" I vow one doesn't know a ſingle face:
" Ha! Lady Fuz!—now for a little chat—
" How do?—Who's here?—Who's there?—
" What's this?—What's that?——
A fine man, newly ris'n from dinner, pops
His head in, careleſs, as the curtain drops;
And hearing only the laſt ſpeeeh or two,
Boldly aſſerts, " All this will never do:"
Then flies to Brooks's, and, in half a minute,
Paints the whole piece, and ſwears there's no-
thing in it.
Thus are the writers of our time undone,
While they, not their productions, take a run;
For, ſpite of all their ſtore of Greek and Gram-
mar,
If you're vociferous, echoing duns will clamour;
'Far other patrons than the Bard muſt court,
The Great Green-Grocer muſt his muſe ſupport,
Taylors

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Taylors and Tallow-Chandlers too unite,
Thoſe to *re-dreſs* him, theſe to *lend new light.*
Such is the general fate!—our luckier Bard,
Plays the ſame game, but holds a ſurer card;
He, from ſuch *grand alliance* ſeeks no fortune,
His taylor's bill perhaps is but a ſhort one;
His farce too has been partly ſeen before;
If dull at firſt, he adds a little more.——
Let then this Court be merciful as ſtrong,
Our author's ſcenes, if languid, are not long;
Scanty of wit, to weary you he's loth,
So cuts his coat according to his cloth.

DRA-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BEAUFORT, - -	Mr. *Wroughton.*
PEPPER, - -	Mr. *Quick.*
PAUL, - -	Mr. *Davies.*
ABBE, - -	Mr. *Wewitzer.*
O'REILLY, - -	Mr. *Booth.*
LANDLORD, - -	Mr. *Fearon.*
1ſt WAITER, - -	Mr. *Kennedy.*
2d WAITER, - -	Mr. *Helme.*
LAURA, - -	Mrs. *Wells.*
MALAPERT, - -	Mrs. *Wilſon.*
FLORETTA, - -	Mrs. *Martyr.*

Scene, BRIGHTON.

THE FOOL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Bar-Room at an Inn in Brighton.

Bells ringing—People calling.

Enter *Maſter.*

Maſt. WHY, John, Thomas, Harry! Where are you all? Why don't you anſwer? Zounds, the houſe is full of noiſe, and you are aſleep.

Enter *John.*

Why, John, where have you all been? Don't you know that we at the watering places have company but half the year, and that we muſt do their buſineſs as quick as we can?

John. Yes, Sir; very true, Sir.

Maſt.

Maſt. And that we muſt work double tides, therefore; and charge double too.

John. Yes, Sir; very true, Sir:—that charge I am ſure I ſhan't forget.

Enter *O'Reilly* and *Floretta* in French travelling Dreſſes.

John. Sir, your obedient humble ſervant.

Maſt. Stand away, John—Sir, your moſt obedient and devoted—

John. Yes, Sir; and very welcome to Brighthelmſtone.

Maſt. John, John—let me ſpeak French to the foreign gentleman—"Monſeer—Je—Je—"hope—que—that vous avez a bon voyage."

O'Rei. What foreign language is that you are ſpeaking now?—Speak Engliſh, and I ſhall underſtand you.

Maſt. Very much obliged to you, Sir;—hope you had a good paſſage here.——John, ſhew the gentleman the beſt room—Preſume you come from France—Hope you come to make ſome ſtay.

O'Rei. Oh, don't hope, my dear, leſt you ſhould be diſappointed.

Maſt. A few days perhaps—John, ſhew the gentleman the beſt apartment—up two pair of ſtairs—Your honour will have the beſt accommodations—Mind and attend the gentleman, John,—Get about your buſineſs as quick as you can—Shall I call any of your honour's ſervants.

[*Exit* John.

O'Rei.

O'Rei. My ſervants! Perhaps I am a great perſonage, and chuſe to travel incog. and don't chuſe to pay the tax.

Maſt. No ſervants! Gad, I am much afraid the houſe is full—but, perhaps your Honour would ſtay a little at the bar here *(Aſide)*. No ſervant, indeed! why then you may wait upon yourſelf. [*Exit.*

O'Rei. Upon my word, and that's very uncivil of my ſervants to turn the gentleman out of the room. Well, and I muſt ſtay a little at the bar here—with all my heart—perhaps it may not be the firſt time I have been there before.

Flo. Mon Dieu! quels betes ces Anglois!

O'Rei. Oh, be eaſy with your French now:—An't we alone by our two ſelves, and what ſignifies impoſing upon each other? but upon my conſcience you women can't be a bit natural even in private.

Flo. None of your ſarcaſms, Mr. O'Reilly—French or Engliſh is all the ſame to me: but as we paſſed for French with the Engliſh gentleman and his wife, I did not know we were to give up the deception.

O'Rei. You may ſay that too—but what ſignifies mentioning it—beſides, our friend the French Abbe introduced us as foreigners, ſo we are ſo—beſides, aren't we to borrow a few thouſands of the gentleman's caſh, and do you think the Engliſh give it to their own countrymen? Ah! let this little head alone for a ſcheme.

Flo.

Flo. Aye, and it will turn out like your laſt plan of carrying over an opera into Ruſſia, and when you and your performers had got there, you found they knew no more of dancing than one of their bears.

O'Rei. Yes, but the bull was their own; beſides, did'nt I engage myſelf, and dance to that tune at leaſt.

Flo. Or when you wanted to introduce Engliſh plays into Paris, were you not ſeized by the police, and turn'd out of the town the next day!

O'Rei. The devil burn the police, I ſay—well, give me Old England, and no police at all.

Flo. And are not you now engag'd on a ſcheme of bringing over learned animals and diſtortions of the brute creation into this country? Foxes that write running hands with their hind legs, and aſſes that dance Engliſh country dances.

O'Rei. And perhaps they do it to entertain their relations, and the Engliſh reward them for it; but no matter—if this Mr. Beaufort advances the caſh, and I ſhould ſucceed, why then the money will do in one country as well as another.

Flo. True; but as he ſeems no fool, perhaps the Abbe may not perſuade him to lend it to us.

O'Rei. The Abbe! upon my word, and you have a ſweet pair of ſcarlet-colour'd lips, and a very tight ſhape, and as pretty a pair of black eyes!—Oh, the Engliſh love black eyes amazingly!—

Flo. And what then?

O'Rei. Why, then, can't you conjure up a melting glance, and melt a few guineas thro' his pocket!

Flo. Well, now you truſt my power, I'll try what I can do for you.

A I R.

When a woman undertakes
For her ſpouſe to manage matters,
What a herd of fools ſhe makes,
How ſhe ogles, how ſhe chatters;
Trying all the means ſhe can,
Beſt to wheedle ſilly man:
'Tis not this—'tis not that,
It is—I will not tell you what.

If the object's young and ſhy,
Madam's coaxing gay and funny;
If the ſwain is old and ſly,
Nothing ſuits but ready money:
Trying all the means ſhe can;
Mend it deary if you can,
'Tis not this—'tis not that—
It is—I will not tell you what.

Enter *John.*

John. Sir, the French clergyman, the gentleman who came over with you, has beſpoke dinner, would be glad of Mounſeer—O—O—your company, I believe.

O'Rei. The very man, my dear—c'eſt moi, Monſieur. [*Exit* John.

Upon my ſoul, now I have got to little England, I ſpake Engliſh ſo naturally, that I forget I am a Frenchman by diſtraction: ſo come along, my dear. [*Going.*

Enter 2d *Waiter*, with a very ſmall Box, and a Little Boy, dreſt as French, with Bag and Sword.

2d *Wait.* Sir, here is the young gentleman, whom the boatman has brought from the veſſel, and the French gentleman's baggage—Pray, Sir, is this all ?

O'Rei. O be aiſy now—an't I married ?—and what baggage ſhould a man have beſides his wife—So bring the young creature—the young Count I mean—along with you, and we ſhall have the whole cargo at once. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A View of the Sea.

A Veſſel, with Sailors taking Baggage out of it.—The Caſtle Inn on one Side.

Enter *Paul* in a travelling Jacket, and *Malapert.*

Paul. Here we are, Mrs. Malapert, ſafe landed, trunks and trumpery—and the Devil take Portugal, I ſay, with all my heart.

Mal. And with all mine too, Mr. Paul! Indeed Portugal's the beſt place for him, for the climate

climate is as hot as fury, and the people are as black as a coal.

Paul. So it is, my little waiting-maid—Old England for my money, and thank Heaven that I and my maſter and miſtreſs are got ſafe here at laſt.

Mal. You and your maſter and miſtreſs, indeed—I think it would have been full as reſpectful if you had thankt heaven for them firſt; and if you had thought of another perſon, it would not have been leſs charitable.

Paul. So I did, my dear, but without mentioning it—You ſerve to ſwell up the account, as a cipher does in a ſum total.

Mal. Do I, Mr. Saucebox? I think you give yourſelf pretty freedoms.

Paul. Freedoms, Mrs. Malapert! why don't I tell you we are upon Engliſh ground, where every body takes what liberty he pleaſes, and therefore——

(*Kiſſes her.*

Mal. (*Retiring.*) And therefore I beg you will behave yourſelf like a gentleman.

Paul. So I do, my dear, and that's the reaſon why I uſe ſo little ceremony; but come, kiſs and be friends then! you and I ſhould agree like our maſter and miſtreſs, the new married couple! Ah! a fine tumbling honey-moon they have had of it, to marry one day, and go to ſea the next—A man ſhou'd have a good ſtomach, Mrs. Malapert——

Mal. You are quite out there—when a man's ſea-ſick he has no occaſion for any appe-

tite at all; but pray now, as you and I are to agree like our maſter and miſtreſs, let me aſk you what ſort of a man this maſter of mine is?

Paul. Why, as to a man, you ſee—he, he! he is juſt the man a huſband ſhould be, for he likes to be maſter, and then he's very œconomical in his family, for he has ſaved my wages for me theſe two years; but he's ſenſible, or at leaſt he has a ſenſible ſervant, which is all the ſame thing.

Mal. Very true, Mr. Paul, ſo they both have; that is the reaſon why I keep adviſing my miſtreſs—Lord! when ſhe firſt came out of the convent of Saint Catherine, ſhe hardly knew a man from a woman; ſo ſhe applied to me, who know theſe things. Now, my dear Malapert, ſays ſhe, when the fatal knot was tied; now, ſays ſhe, what ſhall I do? Madam, ſays I, you are a married woman, and your duty lies in two words—you muſt love your huſband with all your ſoul, and obey my inſtructions with all your heart.

Paul. What, it was you then who taught her all thoſe fooliſh tricks, of patting my maſter's cheeks and fondling him before company! And I believe you gave the French Abbe who came over with him the ſame advice too; for he ſeems to want to be patting and fondling, only not before company.

Mal. O fie, Mr. Paul, the Abbe is a man of diſcretion; but I am not inclined to the church.

Paul. And, faith, I believe the church is even with you; to be ſure, I do think there was another

another gentleman in the ſhip, that ſeem'd more agreeable to your taſte——

Mal. What the young Iriſh midſhipman? he was a little preſſing, to be ſure, and wanted me to run away with him.

Paul. What, out of the ſhip? ay, he knew he was not born to be drowned—but I don't mean him neither.

Mal. Why, ſure, you don't imagine it was the old chaplain?

Paul. Oh, no, no—quite a different thing: a pretty, genteel-looking man, that came over with you.

Mal. Well, then, I can't gueſs—I'm farther off than ever.

Paul. [*Going nearer to her.*] He, he—you are very near it now—what do you think of the man in your eye?

Mal. You!

Paul. Yes, I, my dear.

Mal. Fit for you, indeed! fit for your maſter.

Paul. Oh, by no means! my maſter is too much of a man of honour to interfere with my property.

Mal. Your property, indeed; you jacknaps! Have you the impudence to pretend to me, and to practice upon my weakneſs!

Paul. Oh, no, it is the Abbe who has the impudence to do that, and a pretty fellow he is

too! Come under cover of my maſter, to read old plays, cut paper, and act the monkey.

Mal. Oh, ſcandalous!

Paul. A travelling pauper! his whole wardrobe conſiſting of a ſhort caſſock, a torn chitterlin, a black patch, and the remains of an old hat.

Mal. Mighty fine, indeed! but here he comes to anſwer for himſelf.

Paul. Does he? then I'll take my leave, as I never praiſe a gentleman to his face.

[*Exit.*

Enter *Abbe*, with a Barbette Dog under his Arm.

Abb. Ah, my dear little honey! here is your Adonis at your ſervice; but, upon my ſoul, de Englis mob in the ſtreet are in ſuch a hurry, they overturn a gentilhomme who look about him.

Mal. Yes, yes, the mob, as you call 'em, overturn a great many gentlemen in this country.

Abb. And my littel dog, too! as he was juſt ſtepping a-croſs de kennel, dere came von great Englis bull dog, vid no more civilite dan a porter and overſet him in de mud, and ſpoil all his white ſtockings.

Mal. Ah, Monſieur Mercure, I dare ſay you think the Engliſh ſad dogs, don't you?

Abb. Pon my honor, I no know vat to think of de men; but I ſwear de vomen are charmantes.—

mantes.—Apropos, how does dat ſweet creature your miſtreſs? Have you lay ſome plan now for von ſmall tete-a-tete, juſt dat I may give her a littel inſtruction by herſelf?

Mal. But pray, Mr. Abbe, is there no ſin now in giving you a little inſtruction to my young miſtreſs, for I have a conſcience, I aſſure you.

Abb. Ah! dat is a very troubleſome companion for a waiting-maid! but dere, dere! [*Gives money,*] ſay nothing about your conſcience, and no one vil find it out.

Mal. [*Looking at Money.*] Half-a-crown, Mr. Abbe! you ſeem to value my conſcience at a very low price. I begin to think, now, you mean my young lady no good; beſides, you are my maſter's friend, and ought to be aſhamed of yourſelf.

Abb. Friend! ſo much the better; den I keep de ſecret in de family——de huſband's friend ſhould always be kind to de wife.—I am de woman's man——a perfect Malbrouc at a work-bag.

Mal. Aye, but Mr. Abbe, the women here muſt have a few preſents, or ſo—a ſomething to put in the work-bag—they are not above taking a——a——a——

Abb. Oh, I take any ting from de ladies—they laugh at me, de teize—dey pince—dey kiſs a me—dey kiſs my littel dog—all de ſame—love me, love my dog, you know.

Mal. The devil take his comprehenſion [*aſide*].—but Mr. Abbe, ſometimes 'tis neceſſary to give a littel ſomething.

Abb.

Abb. For de maid! yes, I have a great reſpect for de maid, becauſe "She has a conſcience."

Mal. Pſha, Mr. Abbe! you either will not, or do not underſtand my practice—You are love-ſick, I can be your doctor, but I am a perfect phyſician and muſt have my fee.

Abb. O fi, donc! you would be a quack—"No cure, no pay:"—bring me to your miſtreſs and depend upon my generoſite——I have a conſcience myſelf.

Mal. I'll fit you for this—[*aſide.*] Well, Mr. Abbe, good bye to you, I'll ſee what I can do—Depend upon my ſincerity, rely upon my good word!—A ſcoundrel! half-a-crown for a conſcience, indeed! [*aſide.*]

[*Exit.*

Abb. [*Bowing.*] Pa! get you gone vid your conſcience to de Devil. [*Strokes his dog.*] Ah, my littel dog is my beſt friend after all, for he never aſk for any ting.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in the Inn.

Enter *Paul* with Band-boxes, which he unpacks, and *Beaufort.*

Beau. What a mortification it is for a man to return to his own country to ſhew he has been a fool, as I am! what buſineſs had I to fall

fall in love with a girl through a grate, and marry her before ſhe was well out of the convent! A young fellow, like me, to encumber himſelf with a wife, and then ſuch a wife too! all fondneſs and folly!

Paul. [*Behind.*] Lord Sir my miſtreſs's things encumber us vaſtly—Here's a beef-eater's hat got into a ſhaving-caſe.

Beau. Then to be ſo warmly recommended to me by old Pepper, my correſpondent in London, who knew her from her infancy, and yet not to find out her folly, though he was actually her godfather.

Paul. [*Advances.*] Ah, Sir, I have no opinion of your goodfathers—they always promiſe what they never mean to perform—For my part, I love to anſwer for myſelf.

Beau. Yes, I perceive you do, and without being queſtion'd; however, you have ſome reaſon to lament my marriage as well as myſelf, for you have not ſo many opportunities of putting in a word as formerly: a wife, you find, will have her ſhare of her huſband's converſation.

Paul. Yes, Sir; and it's not a little ſhare will content her.

Beau. Well, every man is taken in one time or another.

Paul. To be ſure, your Honour; and if we muſt be deceiv'd, it's as well to be taken in by the women as not, for they are ſweet creatures, after all;—there is no going on in the world without 'em.

Beau.

Beau. Why, how can you be a judge? wert thou ever tied in the matrimonial nooſe?

Paul. Oh, dear! I have been a ſoldier, you know, and have had as many wives as any man in Chriſtendom, but I never was unfortunate but once, and then I married a fool—But I beg pardon, I meant no reflections at home, your Honour.

Beau. Why, ſirrah, you ſeem to forget that your maſter is married!

Paul. No, Sir, a man never can forget that, I am certain: but every one, as I uſed to ſay, has ſomething to conſole him—To be ſure a ſilly woman is but a bad companion for life.

Beau. Why, you blockhead, I was not aſking your opinion.

Paul. But then every fool ſays, as I ſaid before, a good thing by chance.

Beau. Yes, but I do not wiſh to hear any further proofs of it.

Paul. And if they don't ſpeak at all, why then they don't interrupt converſation; beſides, if ſhe's handſome, that's ſome comfort at leaſt.

Beau. You blockhead, if you don't leave the room this inſtant, I'll break every bone in your ſkin.

Paul. Oh, Sir, I won't give you the trouble—I'm gone! I'm gone!——Lord, Lord! how marriage does alter a man's temper, that he ſhould not be able to bear even comfort!—*(aſide.)* [*Exit.*

Beau.

Beau. Yes, yes, I'm a happy man, that's certain, when even my own ſervants are ſenſible of my egregious conduct.—However, one folly more will cure both—tie the knot a little tighter, and ſlip both nooſes into one !—

Enter *Pepper* haſtily.

Pep. (*Singing.*) "Now the happy knot is ty'd." Joy ! joy ! my dear Beaufort ! I wiſh you joy with all my heart and ſoul—that I do.—

Beau. Joy ! what about, my very good friend, Mr. Pepper ?

Pep. Why, what ſhould it be about but your marriage with Laura, I am ſo glad you are united, and am come poſt haſte from London on purpoſe to congratulate you both.—I told you you might rely upon her god-father's recommendation—I never deceive any body—She muſt have been a charming companion on your voyage.

Beau. Why, look you, Mr. Pepper, as I never deceive any body neither, you and I may perhaps differ about a companion.

Pep. Oh, you have been ſea-ſick, I ſee, and your ſtomach is not right yet ; but you'll thank me, I know you will—ſhe muſt be ſo clever ! I ſhall never forget what an arch little infant ſhe was in her very craddle, and how ſhe uſed to cry and ſquall, and drive every body out of the room when ſhe wanted to go to ſleep.

Beau.

Beau. Very arch, indeed!—I wiſh to Heaven ſhe was aſleep there again. *(Aſide.)*

Pep. Ay, and how ſhe uſed to ſteal my tobacco-box when ſhe grew up and had more ſenſe, and fill it with Bohea tea; and then tie my ſkirts to the chair, and break my ſhins ſo pleaſantly:—and then ſhe uſed to look ſo—aye, ſo ſimple.

Beau. Aye, that look ſhe will have to the laſt.

Pep. Why, Zounds, Mr. Beaufort, I don't underſtand you, and if I was not the civileſt man in the world, I ſhould ſay—but no matter—what the Devil is it you mean?

Beau. Mean! why I mean that the ſenſible huſſy you recommended to me, who broke your ſhins, and a thouſand other pleaſantries, is a damn'd fool, and I am as great a one for marrying her.

Pep. A fool, indeed! why it's a confounded—A fool, indeed!—What, have I liv'd in Moor-fields all my life, very near being an alderman, and twice drill'd in the Artillery Ground, and not know a fool!

Beau. Zounds! Mr. Pepper, you may be as hot as you pleaſe; but do you think I don't know my own wife?

Pep. Come, come, be cool as I am—Perhaps ſhe's a little diffident or ſo—that's natural to a convent; but ſhe was always hopeful, and then ſhe had ſuch a pretty, ſweet, ſoft voice—tho' I have not heard it theſe ten years—ſo ſoft—and—

Laura,

Laura, (ſqualling without.)

Lau. Where is my nown man, my lovey?

Pep. Hey! what the devil is that ſqualling?

Beau. Why, it's that pretty ſoft voice you remember ſo well.

Enter *Laura* haſtily, and puſhes rudely by *Pepper* and takes *Beaufort* under her arm.

Lau. Ah! now my love, did not you promiſe me to come back, and is it not a whole quarter of an hour now, and you have never come back, no, not at all—my love!

Beau. *(Shaking her off.)* Poo! poo! leave off your nonſenſe before company.

Lau. Come, don't poo poo me before people—you did not do ſo aboard the ſhip in the cabbin—I wiſh we were there again—I could always look at your dear face when the ſhip us'd to roll me againſt you.

Beau. Set me againſt you, I believe you mean: but what the devil, don't you ſee your god-father there, whoſe ſhins you us'd to break ſo pleaſantly?

Pep. *(Retiring.)* Oh, Heavens! don't look at me, I'm thunder-ſtruck!

Lau. Oh, I never look at any gentleman when my nown dear is by; but what for? becauſe that would be naughty.

Pep. (*Coming up.*) Pray, ma'am, I'm I a figure to be naughty with? What the devil do you take me for? Crim. Con. Lothario, or Jack the Giant-Killer, to eat a woman u at a mouthful!

Lau. Oh, dear Hubby, he frightens me to death! Pray ſtand between us—what a difference there is betwixt your ſweet eyes and thoſe goggling ones of his!

Pep. Goggling eyes! ah, now I ſee the woman's a fool, an abſolute fool, indeed!

Lau. (*Sobbing.*) Oh, oh, don't let him call me fool.

Beau. What elſe ſhou'd he call you, ſimpleton?——Mr. Pepper, you have then found out that I know my own wife, and the devil take your recommendation.

Pep. My recommendation! Damme! but I won't ſwear—though, but ſink me if I know her again—My god-daughter! (*ſhe comes towards him*) don't touch me, I ſay; I'm Jack the Giant-Killer, and ſhall be naughty (*turns to* Beaufort.)

Beau. Don't hang upon me, Madam; I have had enough of your folly—Go to your god-father, he will anſwer for you

Pep. Zounds! go to your huſband—he muſt anſwer for you, whether he will or no.

Enter *Malapert* haſtily.

Beau. What the devil do you want, Mrs. Minx?

Mal.

Mal. I'm only come for my Lady's flounc'd petticoat, Sir.

Enter *Paul*, oppoſite ſide.

Paul. And I want your honour's ſhaving-caſe to pack up.

Beau. Damn the ſhaving-caſe and the petticoat too! I hope they'll never be pack'd up together again, as long as I live.

[*Exit haſtily.*

Lau. Oh, lovely! let us be pack'd up together again, or I ſhall break my heart; for I can't bear to be out of your ſight.

[*Exit after him.*

Pep. O, damn the woman, I ſay. (*To* Malapert.) A good tight wench that! Pray, my dear, are you the Fool's maid here?

Mal. Yes, Sir, I am the Fool's maid, at your ſervice.

Pep. (*Takes her hand.*) And a notable ſempſtreſs, I dare ſay; come here, I want to talk with you about ſome ruffles.

Mal. Indeed, Sir, I can't ſtay to be ruffled, and ſo your ſervant

[*Exit.*

Pep. (*Mimicking.*) And ſo your ſervant!" That's being pretty quick upon me too.

Paul. (*Slaps him on the ſhoulder.*) A word with you, Sir.

Pep. Zounds! what do you want?

Paul. Follow her, your honour, follow her! She told me ſhe lik'd old gentlemen of all things; ſo mum! I'm off with the ſhaving-caſe.

[*Exit.*

Pep. "Mum! I'm off with the ſhaving-caſe!" a comical fellow that—Well, mum! I'm off too, after the petticoat

[*Exit.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

View of the Beach at Brighton.

Bathing Machine on the Stage.—Boats, &c.

Enter *Pepper*, with an oil-ſkin cap and a book.

Pep. WHAT a tireſome place this Brighthelmſtone is! All people in it endeavouring to be fine, and forget their acquaintance! Ah! there's a machine ready—ſo I'll take one dip, juſt to take away that woman's folly, and then for London, for I'm ſure there's no ſenſe here ——I—I—of all people to be ſo impoſed upon! Damnation! if I was not the wiſeſt man in the world, I ſhould be angry at it—but if ever I truſt a woman again! may this fool's cap (*puts on the oil-ſkin*) be my ornament for life.

Enter *Malapert*.

Hey! who's that?—Oh, that's the girl with the petticoat that I cou'd not overtake—but I'll never truſt a woman again, I'm reſolved.

Mal. Now for the Abbe and his appointment with my miſtreſs—Who can this be? (*ſeeing Pepper.*) Oh, her god-father. What an old fiery-faced curmudgeon it is.—I'll ſee whether he knows me.—(*Walks by him.*)

Pep. I won't mind her, I'm reſolv'd. (*Turns the leaves over faſt.*)

Mal. What, not ſpeak! then I will.—How do you do, Sir?

Pep. I've a good mind to ſay, how do you do again—but I won't, tho', damme!

Mal. A fine day for a dip, Sir! are you going into the ſea, Sir?

Pep. (*Aſide.*) I feel I am going. (*Turns to her.*) Yes, my dear, a very fine day for a dip, indeed! Juſt going to take one ſouſe, and then for London. I only want a companion in the machine.

Mal. A companion in the machine!—a guide, you mean. Shall I call one of the bathing women?

Pep. One of the bathing women? A mermaid with a web-foot and a blue bed-gown, that will duck me whether I will or no!—No, my pretty petticoat, I mean a companion in the machine to London. What ſay you, my love, ſhall you and I make one?

Mal. You and I make one! You elderly gentlemen, I believe, think you may behave as you pleaſe to us poor young girls; but I know how dangerous you are.—Slow and ſure, Mr. Pepper!

Pep.

Pep. Pſhaw, my dear! don't be too ſure that I'm ſlow; only come to London with me, and you ſhall ſee what I have got for you—A little ſnug quiet houſe at the corner of Bedlam, quite in the country, all among the brokers, with a grove of chairs and tables, juſt like Vauxhall—four trees before the door, that made the parlour as green as a duck-pond, and two pidgeons that coo, and coo, and bill, juſt as we will do. (*Offers to kiſs her.*)

Mal. I underſtand how it is without the example—oh, Sir, enough, enough!

Pep. Enough! Zounds, if I was not the moſt baſhful man in the world, I could ſay a great deal more. (*Offering to put his arm round her.*)

Mal. Lord, Sir! I wiſh you would ſay more and do leſs then—the devil take an old gentleman, I ſay! Indeed you frighten a timorous body like me out of her wits. Oh, Lord, Sir, there's my miſtreſs yonder coming this way.

Pep. (*Looking.*) Zounds! that fool and her footman, as I'm alive; I would not be peſtered with them for the world.

Mal. Nor I diſcover'd for twenty worlds—Where ſhall we get to? (*Running about.*)

Pep. Here, here,—I have it—into the machine. (*Puſhing her.*)

Mal. A machine, Sir, with you! I ſhall caſt a ſtain upon my character at once.

Pep.

Pep. Oh, never mind now, we'll waſh it out again into the ſea. Zounds, how ſlow you are about your character.

Mal. And you are ſo quick, Mr. Pepper.—"Remember one falſe ſtep entirely—" (*As ſhe is on the ſtep of the machine.*)

Pep. Oh, damn your fame, you ſhall have mine inſtead of it. (*Looking out of the machine.*) We're ſafe now, and out of the fool's reach.—Ah, you ſimpleton! (*Shuts the door.*)

Enter *Laura*, leaning on *Paul*'s arm.

Lau. And does the ſea run all round this great place here?

Paul. Aye, Madam, aye; and the ſea is the ſame every where—all the ſame thing, juſt like matrimony; ſo you will only be tir'd of it, I aſſure you, Ma'am.

Lau. Tir'd of it! nay, how can that be?—But what's that green place yonder?

Paul. That place, Ma'am, they call the Steine, it's where young ladies walk with young gentlemen for the ſake of advice, and married ladies with their huſbands' male friends, for the ſake of their reputation.

Lau. And what's that wooden box there;

Paul. That's what they call a circulating library, Ma'am, where gentlemen put down their names for books they never read, and young ladies to books they ought never to have heard of.

Lau.

Lau. And what's that walk, and that ſtreet, and——

Paul. Oh Lord! Oh Lord! thoſe Ma'am, are lodgings—that's the high ſtreet; thoſe are men and women, and yonder's the ſky over our heads.

Lau. Why, Paul, you ſeem tir'd, I think.

Paul. Oh no, Madam, I was only giving you the whole account at once: you can't tire any body—but me and my maſter. (*Aſide.*

Lau. And what's that white hill upon the ſhore, and that comical carravan by the ſea-ſide?

Paul. (*Aſide.*) There ſhe goes again. Lord, Ma'am, that's a clift, and that's a bathing-machine.

Lau. A bathing machine! and pray what is that?

Paul. Why, ma'am, it's a booby-hutch for people to roll out off, full of flannel, oil-ſkin caps, and old trumpery, and wheels into the ſea.

Lau. (*Touching it.*) Oh dear! I ſhou'd like to ſee it wheel amazingly.

Pep. (*Looking out of the window.*) What the devil can theſe two fools be about now?

Paul. Well, ma'am, I'll wheel it in for you, if you pleaſe. Gad! I believe ſhe'll like to ſee people ſwim ſoon. (*Aſide.*)

Mal. (*At the other window.*) Lord bleſs me! we're going into the ſea, as I'm alive.

Lau.

Lau. (*With* Paul *puſhing the machine forwards.*) Goſh, it's very heavy—there muſt be a deal of lumber in it—there, now puſh, Paul! ah, there it goes ſweetly.

Pep. (*Out of the window.*) Murder and drownation! Where the devil are the humane ſociety! Murder, I ſay, and damn all fools.

Lau. Oh, dear, dear,! my own goddy, Jack the Giant-Killer, as I live. O, Paul! if he gets out, he'll eat me up alive.

Pep. (*Looking out.*) O, you villain! what drown me in the face of the whole world!

Mal. What, ſuffocate two innocent people at once!

Paul. They're ſafe, ma'am, and the ſea is going out; one puſh, and they go over to Portugal in a minute. Here they go.

Lau. Oh dear, dear, how I ſhould like to ſee them ſwim!

[*Scene cloſes on their puſhing the machine into the ſea.*

SCENE II.

A Garden. Trees behind.

Enter *Beaufort* leading in *Floretta.*

Beau. Why, my dear little traveller, you ſpeak Engliſh like a native; but in truth, if you did not, you have moſt intelligent eyes that ſpeak for you.

Flor.

Flor. Oh, for ſhame, what will my huſband ſay? But a handſome compliment, and from the handſome Mr. Beaufort, has double force.

Beau. O, for ſhame now! what wou'd my wife ſay?

Flor. Well then, a truce with them both— Will you oblige my huſband?

Beau. No man cou'd refuſe it, provided your huſband was not ſenſible of the obligation.

Flor. Oh fie! What is it you are talking about? Lord! you aſk one ſuch things, you put every thing out of one's head. But will you accommodate my huſband with the money you promiſed him?

Beau. Have not I promis'd your friend the Abbe, that I would oblige— you?

Flor. Aye, you may have promiſed my friend the Abbe, as you call him; but there are ſome men, perhaps, would think it more gallant to preſent it themſelves, and oblige a lady, without mentioning it to other people.

Beau. Gad, ſhe looks moſt impudently handſome! Why ſhould I not do a generous thing without ſecurity. (*Aſide.*)

Flor. Ah! you Engliſhmen are ſo conſiderate.

Enter *Laura* during this ſcene.

AIR.

AIR II. *Floretta.*

If a gentleman is kind, Sir,
And a lady hits his mind, Sir,
Doing this, or doing that,
Faith 'tis very generous too, Sir,
But he has a hope in view, Sir,
Of a little tit for tat.
Ma'am, I pray,
Don't ſay nay,
Grant me but a moment's chat;
Shou'd I grant,
What you want,
Then a little tit for tat.

With no difference you ſee, Sir,
Is the caſe 'twixt you and me, Sir,
You do this and I do that,
Tho' I ſwear there's no harm meant, Sir,
Yet perhaps you mayn't repent, Sir,
That I grant you tit for tat.
Then, I pray,
Don't ſay nay,
Shou'd you have a moment's chat,
You may want,
I may grant,
Then a little tit for tat.

Beau. Well, there is abſolutely no denying you—[*Takes out his pocket-book*] you are ſo lively and ſo pretty!

Lau. [*Coming up and looking him in the face.*] Yes, indeed, I am very pretty—as pretty as any body; but you ſhou'd not tell that to any body but myſelf.

Flor.

Flor. (*Aſide.*) An abſurd fool!—What an interruption.

Lau. And then, what buſineſs is it you are doing here with your pocket-book! La! during the honey-moon month, a good huſband ſhould not think of any buſineſs but being fond of his dear wife.

Beau. Pſha! Madam, have done with this foolery—We have had enough of it, and ſo let it end.

Lau. La! how can you be ſo croſs now? You were not ſo to Madam Floretta—and I am ſure there are a great many pretty gentlemen that wou'd not be ſo with me; ſo, one kiſs, and we are friends.

Beau. (*Puſhing her away.*) Pſha, Madam! I am tired of this, and this place——Order, if you pleaſe, every thing to be got ready for London—In the tumult of that place I may perhaps bury your folly.

Lau. What, without a kiſs! Well, I am a very good wife, and always do as I am bid. Bye, lovey—bye. And you, Madam Floretta, come along and pack up with me—come. (*Floretta* looks back at *Beaufort.*) Oh you muſt not look at my nown lovey—I muſt have that look myſelf—Bye, dear—bye, bye, to you.

(Exeunt *Lau.* and *Floretta.*

Beau. [*Walks about diſtractedly.*] Bye, bye! Zounds; was ever a man ſo peſter'd with a woman's folly? But I'll bear it no longer; I'll fly to London—any where—and drown in diſſipation the diſappointments of marriage. [*Kicks*

a paper which Laura *has dropt unperceived, and takes it up.*] To me? what can this be? (*Reads.*) "Wou'd you wiſh to know that your "wife is no fool; that your friend, the Abbe, "has deſigns upon your honour; that Mala-"pert is his agent; and that his aſſociates "mean to plunder you—obſerve, and you "will find this to be a truth. Your's un-"known."—What can this mean? My wife not a fool—no; that I cannot believe——the Abbe have deſigns upon my honour, a man I have ſo long known—but here he comes—I'll obſerve him.

Enter *Abbe.*

Abb. Ah, mon cher, my dear friend! I am very happy to meet vid you! I had rather have met your wife. (*Aſide.*) But vat is de matter? You ſeem a little penſoroſo, my ver dear friend.

Beau. Why, England is the ſoil for it, Monſieur Abbe. You are now in a ſtrange country, where the people know more of ſincerity than politeneſs; where their hearts are better than their expreſſions, and they think they may truſt a friend without ſuſpicion.

Abb. Ah! dat is juſt de contre I have been wiſhing for—I hate being ſuſpect; for den no man is ſecure. I have always ſaid, ven I hug my little dog, dat friendſhip was de fineſt ting in de world.

Beau. True, Mr. Abbe, it is the nobleſt of principles, and your order of celibacy muſt make that principle doubly dear to you. Love has

has a thouſand pangs attendant on its pleaſures, leads to numberleſs indiſcretions, and ſometimes betrays the moſt honourable attachments.

Laura walking among the trees.

Abb. C'eſt vrai, lof is all a folle! Oh, voila Madame Laura, your charming wife, you muſt be very happy, indeed!

Beau. Yes, my friend, I am told that I am a very happy man—what think you?

Abb. Vidout doute—ſhe is ſo fond of you; but I give her dat inſtruction in de convent. Ven you are married, I ſay, you muſt be always kind, and ſhe remember her old maſter, and how I uſed to take care of her.

Beau. Yes, I ſhall not forget it myſelf, my dear friend; but I have a little buſineſs that calls me away now, therefore I muſt leave her to your care once more—and I'll take care to watch you myſelf. (*Aſide.*)

Abb. Vouz avez reaſon—you cannot leave her in better hands. (*Beaufort retires.*) What a polite huſband he is, to truſt his wife vid his beſt friend.—Oh, dere is nothing like travelling through France.—(*Goes up to Laura*). Ah, my dear little ſcholar, here is your old maſter come to give you a littel inſtruction.

Lau. Why, I thought as how, Mr. Abbe, when a girl was married, nobody was to inſtruct her but her huſband.

Enter *Beaufort* behind.

Abb. Tout au contraire, my ſweet ſhrub! a huſband can't inſtruct always, ſo den he leave his wife to vat you call in dis contre, de ſincere friend—dat is me—to inſtruct toe—ſo, allons ma chere, I muſt give you a littel advice—but firſt, I muſt give you a kiſs.

Beau. (*Behind.*) The devil you muſt! a pretty briſk beginning!

Lau. La! Mr. Abbe, what muſt you inſtruct me by word of mouth?

Abb. Oui, oui, ma chere, I muſt make you feel the force of my conſeil.—(*Kiſſes her.*)

Lau. Aye, and you would not have it paſs my lips, would you?

Beau. (*Behind.*) Conſeil, with a vengeance! —what a ſcoundrel!

Abb. Oh, charming; what a ſweet ſenſible girl it is—your huſband would make me believe you are a fool, but I know de contraire—you are every ting I would wiſh.

Lau. Well, ecod, you French people do know when a woman is ſenſible.

Abb. Yes, my love, you are a girl of ſenſe ——————of eſprit, and ſhould have a man of talents—ſo come mon ange! give me von proof of your underſtanding at once. (*Seizes her familiarly*).

Lau. (*Breaks from him and aſſumes another character.*) Yes, Sir, I will give you one proof of my underſtanding, which, perhaps, you may

may little expect from me. (*Beaufort advances.*)

Abb. Madam!

Lau. You may well be ſurpris'd—but know, I have long ſeen and felt the low artifices you would have practiced againſt the peace of my huſband, the honour of your friend, and under the maſk of a profeſſion which ſhou'd have made each title doubly ſacred.

Abb. By Gar, ſhe is not de fool, den—

Lau. For this purpoſe, I aſſum'd a character which I thought might better lead to the detection of your deſigns, by inducing you to diſcover them at once.

Abb. (*Recovering himſelf*). Ha! ha! ha! dat is ver vel!—ſo you act a part only den—by gar, I act too—and you really tink I love you—fidone! I am only de ſincere friend, and aſſume a character I am not.

Beau. (*Comes forward.*) True, Mr. Abbe, you have aſſum'd a character very different, indeed, from your real one.

Lau. My huſband here!

Beau. Yes, Madam, but that title ſhall protect what that gentleman calls his friend, no longer.—No, Mr. Abbe, I have been a witneſs to your converſation with my dear Laura, and know not which to wonder at moſt, the change of her conduct, or the alteration of your's.

Abb. Oh, but 'tis only a piece of acting; her looks deceive you, you ſee, and I ſhould do the ſame.

Beau. No not a ſecond time, I aſſure you—Your baſeneſs deſerves perſonal chaſtiſement, but you are beneath my notice.—Go, Sir, to your aſſociates—return to your own country, and practice your deſigns where they will be allowed: thoſe principles, which, under the denomination of gallantry, violate every ſacred and domeſtic tie, have not yet taken root in this kingdom, and I hope never will.

Abb. By gar, he make a ver good actor too—Ce, Monſieur Beaufort, vell den, I leaf von friend to go to another, and my littel dog is my beſt friend after all.

Exit Abbe.

Beau. You are right—for your dog will be ſhortly the only one you have left. (*To* Abbe *as he goes out.*)

Enter *Paul* and *Malapert.*

Mal. Heh! what's this? the Abbe detected!

Lau. And now, my love, perhaps I ſhould apologize to you for acting the part I have done. In the firſt hours of courtſhip, you may remember, you told me, that an exceſs of fondneſs was preferable even to better ſenſe in the character of a wife; I have yielded to your ſyſtem: now tell me whether I am to be the fool or not?

Mal. (*Aſide.*) What, has ſhe deceiv'd me too? I'll be even with her.

Beau.

Beau. I profeſs myſelf a convert—Ridicule is perhaps the beſt teſt of truth—But my dear Laura, why did you not inform me of the Abbe's deſigns yourſelf? Why am I indebted to an anonymous information—an unſigned paper? (*Feeling for the letter.*)

Lau. That letter, my kind Beaufort, was my writing—Will you excuſe the effort of my tenderneſs?

Beau. Excuſe, I muſt ever adore you.

Paul. Gadſo! my miſtreſs has recovered her ſenſes—the fool ſeems to be as wiſe as myſelf.

Beau. (*To* Malapert.) Ungrateful wretch!—you too were an agent in this deſign.

Mal. O dear Sir! pray think of my youth—I was only aſſiſting the church, and may claim—at leaſt, the benefit of clergy.

Beau. Hence from my ſight—a faithleſs ſervant ſhou'd be the outcaſt of ſociety, and a violation of attachment puniſh'd as ſeverely as the worſt violation of truſt.

Mal. One thing comforts me, at leaſt, that is, leaving my maſter and miſtreſs, I ſhall no longer be plagued with their jackanapes of a footman. (*Slaps* Paul's *face and exit.*

Beau. What a light-finger'd jade it is, Paul?

Paul. Say rather heavy-handed, your Honour!

Enter

Enter *Pepper*.

Pep. Well, I am not drown'd, nor puſh'd off to Portugal, but I am going for all that—to London—ſo good bye to you, dearees two—I have met with an agreeable companion, ſo I am off.

Paul. Not with the petticoat in the machine, Sir, I hope.

Pep. No, puppy, in a poſt-chaiſe.—No more water carriage—no more fools—nor fine ladies—nor ſalt water for me, Madam, (*to* Laura)—and no more love, I have been over head and ears in it.

Lau. My dear godfather—I think when old gentlemen take young women for guides—they deſerve a little ſalt-water to waſh out their folly.

Pep. One ſenſible ſpeech at laſt, damme!—but ſhe has got it by heart—it can't be her own—I'm certain—ſo bye! I have met with an agreeable companion, and I am off.

Beau. My good friend, at my requeſt poſtpone your journey till our departure, and you will find your god-daughter full as entertaining as when ſhe uſed to ſteal your tobacco-box, or pin your ſkirts to the chair.

Lau. (*Slily.*) O don't look at ſuch a fool as I am, and with theſe goggle eyes too.—Come, my dear god-father, will you anſwer for me at laſt?

Pep.

Pep. Pipes and tabors! if I was not the graveſt man in the world, I ſhould leap out of my ſkin for joy; but I'll ſtay with you both, eat, drink, laugh, and let out my cloaths with growing fat, and not think of Moorfields in a hurry.

Paul. No, Sir, you never need think of Moorfields while you keep letting out your clothes, for that's a place only fit for a ſtrait waiſtcoat.

Lau. True, but I hope my wiſe guardian will never be mad enough to enjoy it, and if he and my dear Beaufort will forgive my late folly, I will venture to promiſe that my firſt act of wiſdom ſhall be, that of endeavouring to pleaſe my huſband.

Learn hence, ye fair, whatever charms you boaſt,
The gaze of bowing crowds—the public toaſt.
That outward forms of pageantry once paſt,
The heart, when wearied, muſt come home at laſt;
There ſhou'd the woman reign, there ſhew her power,
To charm with pleaſantry the private hour;

Her

Her lord, the Lord of all, ſhou'd be her
pride—
Her joy—her family, her calm fire ſide ;
Oh, may ye all theſe bleſt endearments
prove,
And faſhion ſanctify domeſtic Love.

THE END.